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433 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre
246 for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then
further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the
diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

483 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertilizer available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any